

KRG Representative briefs Members of Congress

1 message

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KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ'S REPRESENTATIVE BRIEFS CONGRESS ON POST-ELECTION IRAQ

Promotes deepening and broadening relations with the U.S.

WASHINGTON [May 4th, 2010] - Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq's (KRG) Representative to the United States Qubad J. Talabani has concluded a comprehensive series of meetings with Members of Congress, including House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Howard Berman, on the state of Iraq and the country's government-forming process, following the Parliamentary elections in March.

In the meetings, Talabani outlined the ongoing deliberations among various political blocs and the fact that no block or candidate has enough votes to form a government without a coalition. "Given how high the stakes are, it is imperative that Iraq forms a good government-one that is formed in a timely manner and one that will also manage the U.S. military transition from Iraq while actively working to resolve Iraq's internal political issues," Talabani said.

Representative Talabani reminded US lawmakers of the need for a robust long-term relationship between the US and Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region. "Deepening US engagement with Iraq and the Kurdistan Region will be very important. This engagement doesn't need to be in military terms, but rather in terms of diplomacy and elevated US representation throughout the country," he said.

The Kurdistan Regional Government has long called for the U.S. government to establish a consulate in the Kurdistan Region and this matter was a focal point of Representative Talabani's discussions with Members of Congress. Congressmen Dana Rohrabacher and Congressmen Lincoln Davis have introduced legislation encouraging the State Department to establish such a consulate in Erbil.

In addition to meeting with Chairman Berman, Mr. Talabani met with 21 members of Congress, including Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL); Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA); Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA); Rep. Gary Peters (D-MI); Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY); Rep. Tom Latham (R-IA); Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH); Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO); Rep. John Tanner (D-TN); Rep. Henry



KRG and Germany inaugurate first Lufthansa flight to Erbil



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Erbil, Kurdistan, Iraq (KRG.org) - Iraqi and Kurdistan Region Ministers, diplomatic officials and the business community gathered on Tuesday to inaugurate Lufthansa's first flights to Erbil International Airport, in the capital of the Kurdistan Region.

Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Interior Minister Karim Sinjari and Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Dr Roj Shawis and Erbil's diplomatic community participated in the ceremony.

In his speech Sinjari said, "By coming here, Lufthansa has made the determination that Iraqi Kurdistan is a safe and secure place to work." He added, "I commend Lufthansa for making the decision to bring their services to us, and to the people and business of Kurdistan and Iraq."

A large group of guests assembled on the tarmac of Erbil International Airport (EIA) to hear speeches by officials and business representatives and watch the arrival of Lufthansa flight 696 from Frankfurt.

Peter Andres, Lufthansa's Vice President for Corporate Security, commented on Erbil's hospitality and beauty. He thanked Austrian Airlines, which was the first regular scheduled carrier to the Kurdistan Region, for paving the way for other airlines, and said that Lufthansa plans to resume flights also to Baghdad this summer after a stoppage of many years. He noted the presence at the ceremony of Germany's Consul General Dr Oliver Schnakenberg and officials from Germany's Interior Ministry and Foreign Ministry.

Stafford Clarry, Acting Director of the airport, described its evolution since its beginnings in 2005. School children are given tours of the airport, he said, as "They are our future, the airport is our future, and this airport is also your future."

Johnson (D-GA); Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN); Rep. Robert Wittman (R-VA); Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA); Rep. Steve Rothman (D-NJ); Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX); Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL); Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN); Sen. Roland Burris (D-IL); Sen Lindsey Graham (R-SC) Sen Edward Kauffman (D-DE) and with the staff of the Kurdish American Congressional Caucus.

About the Kurdistan Region

The Kurdistan Region is a constitutionally recognized region in federal Iraq. With a population of over 4 million and rapidly increasing, the three governorates of Duhok, Erbil and Suleimania cover approximately 40,000 square miles. The Kurdistan Region is considered to be the safest, most stable Region in Iraq, and it is host to an ever expanding number of commercial and trade initiatives.

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